

Alden L. Schiller III

March 27, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

My name is Alden Schiller. I'm a real estate broker and investor in Denver, Colorado. I received my MBA in 2009 and have been working to help my clients buy and sell investment properties for the last two years.

I have known Ross since we were in the 3rd grade. We grew up camping, swimming, digging for worms in the backyard, building forts and telling stories to each other. A Friday would come upon us and it was a matter of where we were staying: his parent's place or mine. He is someone I consider to be a true blue friend. Over the years I've witnessed the flowering of a mature, insightful person with goodness at the core of his being. More recently we spent time discussing business ideas, ventures and investment strategies. Ross is like a brother to me and I am confident that anything he has done was with the best intentions.

Although we went to different schools, Ross and I stayed in very close contact. And, as is true of all long term friends, even after time has gone by, the moment we see each other it's as if no time has passed at all. I love Ross very much, and to hear that he has been accused of these crimes is very disconcerting. This is why I traveled across country to testify on his behalf at his trial. Unfortunately, due to bad weather, I had to turn back half way to New York.

I understand that Ross has now been convicted of a litany of crimes. Frankly, I am still very much in shock over the whole thing. It's difficult for me to accept because Ross has shown me while growing up together that deep down he is a kind hearted soulful man. One small example illustrates this. I remember once we were eating breakfast and a bee landed on the table. I put a cup over the bee, trapped it and put it in the freezer to kill it. Ross immediately told me to take the bee out of the freezer. When I refused he took it out himself and scolded me for being heartless. I look back on that moment as one where Ross defined himself as one of the kindest people I know. I think how Ross is a guy who would defend a bee against one of his best friends and how something small like that can actually take considerable character. It shows what a compassionate, empathetic person Ross is at his core.

Ross has always lived life being very conscious of those around him. He took a personal interest in my well being and showed me that he deeply cared about my happiness and that I was flourishing in my environment.

Judge Forrest, I am not envious of your position. You are tasked now with the very difficult decision of enforcing appropriate penalization to a man whom you do not know personally. I hope that I have been able to showcase even a sliver of the humanity of Ross. I understand that now you are in control of the fate of my dear friend and I want to plead for you to spare him a lengthy sentence. Although I will not defend his actions I will support the man who I know is decent, kind, and caring towards all those he surrounds himself with. Despite his conviction, Ross is an asset to society and I beg that you consider his character when making your decision.

Please, you have my sincerest thanks for your consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alden Schiller III', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Alden Schiller III



# **LETTER 48**

[REDACTED]

March 10th, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

I am a graphic designer at a company in San Francisco that makes software for elementary schools. I have known Ross since childhood and spent a year living with him as an adult. I consider him to be one of my oldest and closest friends. Growing up together I was always impressed by his kindness and gentle nature. Ross treated everyone with respect, even the kids who bullied us in middle school. And that's because Ross sees the best in people.

A few years ago Ross moved across the country to help me start a company that scanned family photos. I was also going through a painful break up of an eight year relationship. Ross not only helped me get my company on track but more importantly he helped me get my life back on track. Often before work we'd drive down to the ocean and Ross would teach me how to surf. Waiting for a set of waves we'd talk about our dreams for the future. We both wanted to start families and hoped that one day our kids might become friends.

Since Ross's arrest he has told me many times that all he wants in the world is to live a simple life with his friends and family. I know in my heart, and from my years of experience with Ross, that when Ross is eventually released he will not be a threat to society in any way. For the hundreds of people who know and love Ross I hope you will consider as short a sentence as possible. He is a good person who has much to give and contribute. The world will be a much poorer place without him.

Sincerely,

  
René Pinnell  
[REDACTED]

# **LETTER 49**

Casey Nelson  


March 25, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

I am writing to petition you on behalf of my friend Ross Ulbricht who will be sentenced May 15, 2015. I believe, and I hope to persuade you, that a harsh sentence is not appropriate for Ross. Please consider my testimony and the words of Ross's many friends, colleagues and family members as you make a decision that will hugely impact not just one man, but his entire community.

I currently live in Washington, DC and attend graduate school at The George Washington University, studying public health and medicine. I am a longtime friend of Ross Ulbricht. I have known Ross for over ten years as we went to high school together in Austin, TX and became friends as teenagers. Ross and I stayed close in college and afterwards. I have many fond memories of Ross throughout the years - vacationing with me at my family's beach house, socializing at my childhood home, relaxing in the sunshine on the lake. Ross and I have kept in contact and had the pleasure of seeing each other in our hometown frequently over the years. We would both return to Austin, TX to visit our community of friends and family around the holidays and on vacation. I last saw Ross at a birthday celebration for our mutual friend over the winter holidays prior to his arrest in October 2013.

Ross has always been a kind and generous friend - he was person who you could call upon if you needed to talk or reflect on any of life's big questions, or if you just wanted playful company and to have some fun. He is a loyal person, greatly respected by his peers. I have admired his compassion and acceptance towards his friends for as long as I have known him. Even when we were teenagers, he was in tune with the world around him and innately empathetic, never one to judge another. Ross is a gentle person, a trusted person. Being two years younger, I looked up to Ross both because I knew he was someone who would make great contributions to society and because I was inspired by his positive spirit and great attitude. He is so intelligent and such a joyful person, I count myself lucky to be his friend.

As many will attest, Ross Ulbricht's character is not defined by his criminal conviction. His conviction does not negate all the positive things he has done in his short life - from Eagle

Scouts, to research in college and graduate school, to the steadfast personal relationships he has maintained with family and friends. Ross is not done contributing to society. He is not done inspiring others.

Please spare Ross an unnecessarily long sentence. A long prison sentence or one that mandates maximum security prison would not afford Ross the opportunity to return as a contributing member of society, nor does it benefit justice. Please use your discretion to impose a sentence for Ross Ulbricht that is not unduly long or severe.

Thank you for considering my words and please keep them in mind as you use your power to determine a reasonable sentence for Ross Ulbricht.

Very Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Casey Nelson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Casey Nelson



# **LETTER 50**



Lindsay A. Lewis  
29 Broadway, Suite 1412  
New York, New York 10006

March 1, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
U.S. District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl St.  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

My name is Brandon Schaffner. I am a Ux designer living and working in Houston Texas. I met Ross Ulbricht 17 years ago, in my junior year of high school when I started dating his sister. Through that relationship I got to know the Ulbricht family, including Ross, very well. I spent time at their house and accompanied them on vacation and got to see Ross in many situations and feel qualified to speak about who he is as a person.

Ross was a smart, upbeat middle schooler who loved reading comics, playing soccer and riding his bike. He was one of those kids who had a spark in his eyes and was always happy and good natured. He was very involved with his Boy Scout troop and through that gave back to the community over the years.

Although I am aware that Ross has been convicted of serious crimes, I can attest that he is a good hearted man and not a hardened criminal. Rather, Ross is a caring sensitive individual who is a danger to no one.

*Seal*  
*Brandon Schaffner*

# **LETTER 51**

[REDACTED]

March 22, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest, United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
Daniel Patrick Moynihan United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007-1312

Dear Judge Forrest;

I am writing to you in support of granting as short a sentence as possible to Ross William Ulbricht. I am a seventy two year old Licensed Professional Counselor in Austin, Texas with a Master's degree in counseling psychology and over twenty years experience in clinical practice. As a close friend of the Ulbricht family, I have known Ross Ulbricht all his life and have had frequent contact and interaction with him throughout that time.

My observation of and experience with Ross Ulbricht has consistently revealed him to be a person of extraordinarily fine character. Ross has always exhibited a strong sense of respect for life and an aversion to violence. I have personally seen him as a loving, creative and playful child and teen develop into a kind and caring young man with a sincere concern for others. Ross has long-term friendships as well as very close family ties, and a deep sense of loyalty. He was a diligent student throughout his educational career. He participated enthusiastically in the Boy Scouts, taking part in numerous community service projects on his way to becoming an Eagle Scout. Ross has been unwaveringly forthright and honest, as well as idealistic, from early childhood to the present. As Ross has developed into a young adult, I have been pleased with and grateful for his continuing friendship.

I am definitely familiar with Ross's case, as I have followed it from its outset. I traveled halfway across the country to testify in court to Ross's good character because I believe in him so strongly. It is clear to me that the conduct for which Ross has been convicted does not represent Ross as a person, nor the fine contributions he is capable of making to society. Knowing Ross as I do, and as a mental health professional, I am confident Ross will, upon his return to society, be an asset to his community and to the world.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you wish.

Respectfully,

*Karen Steib Arnold, L.P.C.*

Karen Steib Arnold, L.P.C.

[REDACTED]

# **LETTER 52**

March 30, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

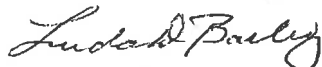
Dear Judge Forrest,

The first time I met Ross Ulbricht was when he was around 12 years old. His mother is a family friend and she brought him by when she came to visit my home in Austin, Texas. Ross and I spoke for a short time in my front yard and he was gracious, concerned about his mother's opinion, and well appointed. He was very polite, obviously bright, and respectful. Over the years, I heard about Ross from his mother and kept up with him through his sister's updates. The reports were always positive as Ross achieved a series of outstanding academic accomplishments.

When Ross came back home from his graduate studies in the northeast, I visited his mother in their home. Because he was a intelligent, and personable young man, I offered to recommend and assist him in finding a job in Austin. My background is in high tech -- I worked for the leader in the computer industry for 15 years. Also, I was an adjunct professor in a top business school teaching MBAs and undergraduates and spent much informal time career-counseling students. I thought Ross's physics degree provided him with the proper logic knowledge and skills for an investment career. These are the type of skills needed in good investment selection and trading. Ultimately, through contacts here, I did arrange for him to interview for a position in finance at a local high frequency trading firm. They said Ross interviewed very well but did not have an opening for his skills.

I believe in the fairness of the US government and am writing this recommendation for Ross because I have faith that my government will be fair and kind. I do understand that Ross was convicted and do not oppose the decision. What I am asking is that the court give the shortest possible sentence to a bright and personable young man who has a desire to do positive work for society. Once free, I trust Ross would take the right path.

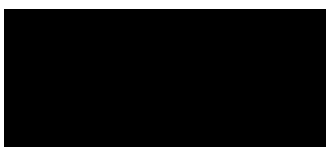
Sincerely,



Linda D. Bailey



# **LETTER 53**



March 20, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest

United States District Judge

Southern District of New York

United States Courthouse

500 Pearl Street

New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

I have known Ross Ulbricht for more than twelve years, since we began our undergraduate degrees together at UT Dallas. We weren't technically roommates, but lived in adjacent quarters, effectively cohabitating throughout our time there. Since then, we have stayed in loose contact as our lives and occupations have diverged, yet maintain a sincere and genial connection and correspondence to this day, throughout his incarceration.

I work in the recreational boat industry on the east coast. I hold a USCG Captain's license on inland waters and also do contract work repairing and restoring classic sailing vessels. I have been following Ross's case, conviction, and understand that you have the responsibility for his upcoming sentencing. Since there is little room in court for unqualified opinion, I am nevertheless grateful for this opportunity to convey my feelings and experiences of Ross's character to you as you decide his sentence.

Ross is a responsible, caring, and deeply soulful individual who has repeatedly impressed me with his depth of character over the years. I struggled in college and had a hard time adjusting to living on my own and taking care of myself. At that time, I looked up to Ross and was able to learn from his self-discipline, work-ethic, and personal habits. He was always happy to include others in his own positive activities and I benefited from the solid example he set of good study habits, yoga practice, and regular outdoor exercise. Eventually, I came to understand that his success in school and social circles couldn't be attributed to good habits alone, but came from a deeply sincere and loving nature in the way he related to others and conducted himself. Many times he invited me to spend time meditating and attending workshops to study self-empowerment, peaceful communication, and spiritual mindfulness. I cannot think of another person who embodies those ideals as well as Ross does.

Ross will often go out of his way to make the world around him a better place. Once, when I was sick and bedridden, he squeezed himself into a ridiculous costume and burst into my room, dancing around wildly. He soon had me laughing so hard that my ribs were hurting, and it wasn't long before I was out of bed and feeling better again.

Another time, many years after college, I called him up out of the blue. I was hiking on the

Appalachian Trail at the time and was wet, exhausted, and covered with poison ivy. Ross drove 300 miles out of his way to come and pick me up and bring me back home to stay with him.

Your Honor, I have no doubt that in your tenure you have come into contact with hardened criminals who are dangerous to society, for whom there is no help but for the state to separate them from those they would harm. I truly believe that Ross in no way represents one of these people and I think that the longer he is shut away in a cell, the worse off the world will be for it. I know that we all make mistakes, and must be responsible for our actions. If Ross has taught me anything, it is that we also have the ability to overcome them and become better people, hopefully with the help of our friends, family, and community.

Sincerely,

  
Capt. James Woodring





# **LETTER 54**

March 29, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge, Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse, 500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forest

My name is Gail Gibbons and I am a Licensed Psychotherapist in private practice for thirty years.

I first met Ross Ulbricht and his family when he was a young toddler. I was impressed with the family's close ties to one another and extended family as well. Ross's mother and aunt had created a small business together and his father was a well known green builder in the Austin community. I remember going to social gatherings at their home with many friends and family members there and a lot of children as well. My son was one of those kids and he and Ross and Ross's cousin played together often. They also attended a Montessori school together.

I had a very personal and intimate connection with Ross and his family during this time and I can say, from both a personal and professional viewpoint, that Ross was often the most peaceful and easygoing child when playing with other children. I never witnessed him as aggressive or disruptive, but often the "most mellow" as my son would say, of the children playing together.

I saw no indication that Ross would become the kind of person he is being portrayed as today in his criminal conviction. Rather he struck me as the kind of young person whose intelligence and temperament would lead him to accomplish and achieve work of an inventive and positive benefit to his community. I remember at one time he had a small business collecting and selling donated books to benefit charitable causes.

The criminal conduct that Ross has been convicted of does not represent or reflect in any way the Ross, and the peaceful and loving family, that I know. His character and the support of his family point to a person whose achievements could offer positive benefit to his community. A shorter sentence would grant him that opportunity.

Please consider these factors and the age of this young man in your sentencing.

Sincerely,

*Gail Gibbons*  
Gail Gibbons

Gail Gibbons LPC LMFT SEP



## **LETTER 55**

[REDACTED]  
March 31, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

This letter is to appeal to you in the sentencing of Ross Ulbricht. I am a family friend, father of four, and work as a sales engineer in the marine industry.

I have known Ross through his family, as a friend, for about seven years. I also had a business association with him while he was in the book-selling trade. At that time I spoke to several people about Ross, their experience of him and his business. Without exception every person gave me nothing but confidence about Ross' professional dealings and ethics. This was also corroborated by my own experience.

In the period when I was associated with Ross, he gave me every indication that he was worthy of my trust and friendship. He showed himself to hold an exemplary, honest and forthright character. Beyond this, I found him to be a positive person who was not interested in conflict. I believe this is the true Ross Ulbricht and I would not hesitate to have a professional relationship with him in the future.

I am aware of Ross' conviction and the charges that were brought against him. It is a difficult position for Ross and I know he is not taking it lightly. I urge you to consider his lack of a prior record, his conduct while incarcerated, and his general positive nature when applying his sentence. Based on my knowledge and experience of Ross Ulbricht, I believe it would be right to give him nothing more than what is mandatory.

Sincerely,

  
Robert Reisinger  
[REDACTED]

# **LETTER 56**

March 21, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

My name is Clay Cook. . I'm writing on behalf of my friend, Ross Ulbricht.

I was born and have resided in Texas for 55 years. I owned a Construction Company in Houston, Texas and I am currently semi-retired and live in the Texas Hill Country

I first met Ross when he was seven years old while on a family vacation. I became fast friends with Ross and his family in the subsequent years. The Ulbricht family and I spent many weekends and vacations together.

Over the years I have watched Ross grow from a child to an adult. Ross was a very well mannered and respectful child and this carried on into his adult life. Ross is a courteous and conscientious person and was raised by two loving parents. The Ulbricht Family is very traditional in every way. Lyn and Kirk raised Ross and his sister Cally to be independent, ambitious, and considerate. Ross always showed great respect for his family, friends, and humanity.

I can attest to Ross' intelligence and patience in frustrating situations; I taught Ross backgammon and soon thereafter, he was teaching me. I have seen his caring and compassionate demeanor many times as he was always willing to help me or whomever needed help. He was especially protective of his grandparents, elderly friends and acquaintances. Ross could always be counted on to carry his load whether we were working or vacationing. He was simply always a joy to be around and an exemplary young man.

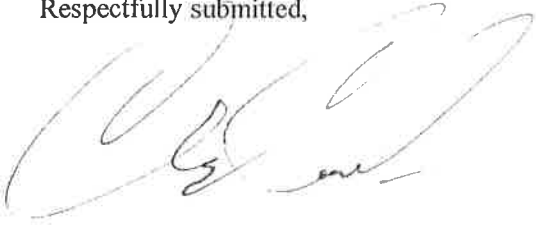
Ross excelled in school and has a B.S. from the University of Texas at Dallas and a Master's Degree in Physics from Pennsylvania State University. He also completed the Eagle Scout program of the Boy Scouts of America in Austin Texas. Ross is a very intelligent and goal oriented person. Any one of these accomplishments, taken individually, bespeaks of a person who knows determination and sacrifice.

Having said this, I also understand the severity of the charges he has been convicted of. In my life I have seen many things that defy description and I believe this is one of those circumstances: Ross is the last person I would have ever thought would be in this situation. .

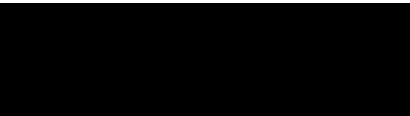
I am not here to question the court or the jury's decision. I would only ask that in sentencing, the court consider rendering a sentence that would give Ross a chance to right his wrong. A person of his intelligence and caliber certainly can be of benefit to our society and humanity.

Thank you for your time concerning this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Clay Cook', written in a cursive style.

Clay Cook

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the first line of the address.A black rectangular redaction box covering the second line of the address.A black rectangular redaction box covering the third line of the address.

# **LETTER 57**



James McFarland  


March 18, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

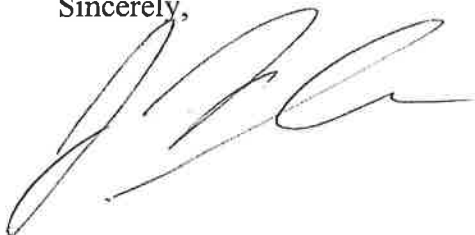
Dear Judge Forrest,

I am writing this letter to attest to the character of Ross Ulbricht, and to ask that you consider a sentence that will allow him to return to society and have the positive impact I know he is capable of.

I am currently a research neuroscientist working at the University of Maryland. I first met Ross in high school over 10 years ago in physics class. We became close friends, and spent a good deal of time together throughout high school, and continued our friendship after we both went off to college. Ross clearly stood out from his peers in high school, demonstrating a level of maturity and selflessness that went far beyond his years. In all of my interactions with Ross, without exception, he was open, honest, and extremely caring. On numerous occasions his friendship and advice helped myself (and others) navigate the difficult situations of high-school social life, and he set a consistent example of generosity and honesty. Critically, he set this example not just through his words, but, more importantly, in how he always treated others in a caring and selfless way, from his family and friends to complete strangers.

I am confident that the criminal offenses Ross has been convicted of are not representative of these core values he has demonstrated throughout the time I've known him, and certainly do not reflect the great potential he has for producing a highly positive impact on society.

Sincerely,



# **LETTER 58**



March 19, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

We are an emergency room physician and mother of three who reside in Austin, Texas and have been close friends of Ross Ulbricht's parents, Lyn and Kirk Ulbricht for many years. We have known Ross since he was two years old, almost his entire life. Ross attended the same middle and high schools that our two sons and daughter attended and he was often with us for birthday parties, playgroups, family dinners, etc. Even after leaving for college we would still see Ross several times a year when our families met for holidays and casual get togethers.

It was a terrible shock when Ross was arrested. We found it hard to believe. He grew up with loving, involved parents, surrounded by family and friends. His school years included soccer, field trips and family vacations. He was in the Boy Scouts and achieved Eagle. Ross was creative, artistic, loved adventure and being outdoors. Growing up, he often went on camping and fishing trips with his father.

Ross was good academically. He was in the gifted-talented program, took advanced high school classes, and received a full scholarship at the University of Texas Dallas. Never did Ross seem interested in acquiring material possessions. His mother often commented on how Ross would forget his shoes even when leaving on trips. With his easy going manner we often laughed at how he could manage to stay organized with his forgetfulness.

We saw Ross even after he had left for college when he would stop by our house. He was always friendly, sweet, and happy. He liked to just hang out and talk and enjoyed

being around people and home cooked meals. He seemed very aware of healthy food and living and did not seem to be interested in drugs or alcohol.

Early on when bail had seemed possible, and because of our belief in Ross' good character, we committed \$20,000 to bail. We were confident that Ross would never jeopardize the trust that his family and friends placed in him.

For as long as we have known Ross he has always been kind, caring, loving, considerate, sensitive - with his family, at school, with us and our children, and in interacting with others. We've seen Ross as a thoughtful gentle dreamer who loved the outdoors and venturing off the beaten track.

We have been very disturbed at Ross's involvement in Silk Road. It has been shocking and unexpected. We are extremely sad for Ross and his family.

Apparently Ross has made bad choices. His idealism and dreams have led to serious wrong doing. However, we truly believe that Ross is a well-meaning young man with a good heart. We believe that he still has the capacity to do something worthwhile for others. Our great fear is that his life will be wasted. We sincerely hope that Ross may have another chance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Douglas Mills".

Douglas Mills, MD

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valencia Mills".

Valencia Mills

# **LETTER 59**

[REDACTED]

March 24, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York, U S Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street, New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

We are grandparents of Ross Ulbricht, and we have known him his whole life. Before he entered the Justice system, we knew he was a very promising man. Now we give him over to the system until he pays his debt to society. When he is free again, Ross will undoubtedly be a fine citizen. We have such strong faith and trust in Ross that we pledged our home for his bail.

Should you see fit to give him the shortest possible sentence, Ross could use some of his inherited traits to benefit the community with what time he has left. He has the spatial skills necessary for architectural designing. They are in his blood, passed on from us, his Dad and our parents. Or he might leave these talents untapped for other pursuits.

Ross has a good share of humanitarianism. He is a people person. He has the support of a lot of friends. One of his earliest crowd of friends was his group of tiny metal figures which sparked his imagination as he played with them for hours on the floor of his room at age eight.

Ross honed his leadership skills in a camping troop with the Boy Scouts of America. He once led a patrol of scouts to a good source of clean water with his knowledge of survival in the wild. He forcibly chipped through stone to get to the water they needed. He became an Eagle Scout.

Ross was resourceful and worked his way through UT Dallas with the aid of a 4-year scholarship. In a part-time job, he donned protective clothing to work in a "clean room" using nano particles experimentally. At Penn State, he purchased a house and rented it out to students, as a means of supporting himself through school. He earned a Masters degree in Materials Application and Engineering.

Ross has a strong religious faith and the values of peace, love and service.

We are in hopes that this letter will serve to let you know more about the Ross Ulbricht we know and dearly love.

Sincerely,

  
Martha and Herb Ulbricht

[REDACTED]

# **LETTER 60**

Alexandria, Virginia  
11 March 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

I am Timothy Arthur O'Leary, a free-lance journalist and former communications officer for the World Health Organization and the international medical charity Doctors Without Borders.

I write in the matter of Ross Ulbricht, who was recently convicted in your court of running an illegal drug marketplace.

I was distressed to learn of Ross's conviction because I have been a friend of Ross, of his parents Lyn and Kirk, his sister Cally, and his aunt Kim Lacava, since the mid 1990s, and because I hate to see any bright and promising young person ruined, if even through actions of his own.

When Ross was still a high school student in Austin, Texas, I developed a concern for his welfare, counselling him and his mother about the advantages and disadvantages of his accepting a full academic scholarship from the University of Texas at Dallas. I knew something about the university and the Dallas community because I was then an editorial writer for *The Dallas Morning News*. It was to a certain extent because of my advice that Ross accepted the university's offer.

When his mother would drive up to Dallas to visit Ross, she would stay at my house, and I was an occasional guest of the Ulbrichts and of his aunt in Austin. I cared about and continue to care about Ross, the rest of the Ulbrichts and their extended family. As a parent of two daughters, I imagine how devastated Lyn and Kirk must be by their son's conviction and the prospect of a long prison sentence.

Without getting into details of the case, I have conveyed my sympathies to the family. During a recent business trip to Sydney, Australia, I went out of my way to visit Cally, thinking that the sight of an old family friend might alleviate whatever feelings of hurt and isolation she might have, separated as she is from her only sibling and from the rest her family by an ocean and thousands of miles.

Although I have not been in direct contact with Ross since his graduation from the University of Texas at Dallas in 2002, I have stayed in touch with his mother and with his aunt. I followed Ross's life from afar and was as pleased by his academic success as I am disappointed and dismayed by the jury's finding of guilt.



Based on what I know of Ross, I have considered the criminal activities of which he has been convicted to be out of character. The Ross that I knew was intelligent, charitable, idealistic, kind and family-oriented. I believe that these criminal activities do not represent the real person or the positive things that he would be capable of achieving both for himself and for society if he were to be spared a long prison sentence.

I would and do, therefore, Your Honor, implore you to impose as short and humane a sentence as possible so that Ross can eventually return to his family and to society and make the kind of positive contributions of which I believe that is capable and, I am sure, inclined.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Timothy A. O'Leary".

Timothy A. O'Leary

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature block and the bottom of the page.

# **LETTER 61**

J'aime Mitchell



March 22, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

My name is J'aime Mitchell and I grew up with Ross in Austin, TX. We became close friends in my sophomore year of high school when I was dating his best friend but we have had mutual friends since childhood. Throughout school, I was in several classes with Ross and his friends: advanced placement math classes, gifted and talented English classes, Spanish, and photography to name a few. It's come to my attention that Ross has been convicted of a crime and it's hard for me to reconcile that fact with the cherished memories I have of Ross, so I hope you will consider my letter when sentencing him.

Throughout the years Ross proved his strength of character to me many times. When dating his friend, our social activities revolved mostly around our mutual love for the outdoors. Our group would frequently go camping, swimming, and hiking in the areas around our hometown together. We even made a game of testing our survival skills in the woods, where we would create obstacle courses with rope swings, tree climbing, and bouldering. We learned a lot about our personal limits and our abilities to overcome challenges, but what stands out most is how Ross would support and encourage people to become stronger both physically and mentally. He would often be the first and the last person to complete challenges because he would lead by example and then would circle back to make sure nobody was left behind. Our adventures built a strong bond of trust among all of us, and we all felt safe going into the wilderness together because knew we could rely on each other along the way. It has been many years since these adventures and, although this group may not see each other often, the sincerity and honesty of our friendship remains just as true.

Ross is also one of the reasons that a few of us purchased land in Costa Rica a years ago to help reforest a site that had been destroyed by slash and burn agriculture. Ross and his family owned a house on the Osa Peninsula that was well-travelled by many locals and tourists. On three separate occasions I can remember, I had friends who didn't know the Ulbrichts return

from the Osa to tell me that they were impressed by the hospitality and warmth they experienced during their stay – only to determine later that it was in fact Ross who had hosted them. Whether in kayak or hammock, Ross always seemed to be at peace there, and that feeling radiated out to everyone around him. When he would come back to school after a stay in Costa Rica, he carried with him a keen awareness of his own personal integrity and a sense of being in harmony with nature. He inspired us with his stories of living close to the land and engendered a sense of stewardship that is obvious in the careers that many of us chose.

At this point in time, I have been working as a professional in Sustainable Development for five years and have seen the positive impact that people like Ross can have on their communities: the selflessness of never leaving anyone behind, the community servitude of an Eagle Scout, and the peaceful demeanor of someone who loves the outdoors are all characteristics that bring benefits to this world. The crimes he has been convicted of do not represent who Ross is as a person or the positive things he is capable of achieving. Please consider as short a sentence as possible, one that allows Ross to return to a community that needs him.

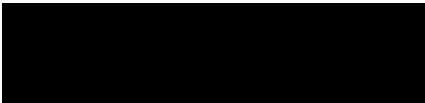
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J'aime Mitchell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

J'aime Mitchell, LEED AP



# **LETTER 62**

  
March 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

I believe there are some things you should know about Ross Ulbricht before you deliberate with his sentencing. I can say with confidence, he is one of the best men I've been blessed to know. He is kind, gentle, intelligent, considerate, patient, and passionate about changing the world for the better. He is the type of man who is not just open to helping but searching for ways to help others. I once shared with Ross a story of how I saved a friend's life, and his response was unlike that of most: "I've always wanted to save someone's life." I wish I could save his life too, but his fate is in your hands now, and as you decide what is to be of his life, I pray that you consider my testimony as well as the testimony of so many others who have been positively impacted by Ross.

I grew up with Ross. We went to the same high school and ran in the same circle of friends, a tight-knit group of loyal, loving people who have stayed in touch over the years. We would have regular parties during the holidays that felt almost like a yearly reunion where we could talk and catch up on each other's lives. I always remember Ross smiling with something positive and supportive to say. One year, the year our class was supposed to have their 10-year reunion, our friend reneged on his duties as treasurer to organize the reunion. Funny enough, he was the one hosting the party we were attending at the time. Anyway, Ross told me he would take it upon himself to organize the reunion and make sure it happened. See that's who Ross is. He's a problem solver, always looking for a positive solution.

After Ross's arrest, so many of our circle of friends reached out to each other in astonishment. How could this be? Not Ross. Anybody but Ross. I called a mutual friend who was organizing communication on Facebook and told him if there was anything I could do to help, I wanted to help. My best friend Isabelle called and we talked about how wrong it felt, and she said, "The saddest part of all this is the possibility of losing the life and freedom of such a bright soul." We have both known and loved Ross Ulbricht. And although she knew him better in the first half of his life, I have come to know him deeply in the second half.

See I came to NY around the same time that Ross did, not because of Ross, but because I am an actress, and I was pursuing my dreams. The week I moved, Ross's mom called me asking to donate to Ross's bail. I happened to mention I just moved to NYC. Lyn told me Ross was in NYC, and would I want to visit him. "Of course! If he wants to see me,"

I said, I figured I was the only friend in New York who could come see him. This turned out to be true, so I've been visiting Ross regularly ever since and have come to know him far better than I ever did when we were kids. Even in prison, he is the same Ross, making a positive impact on his community. He made a pact to commit to a consistent Yoga practice and organized a class to teach others and share how Yoga and its philosophies can reduce stress in confinement. He taught fellow inmates math so they could pass their G.E.D. And so many times when I would visit Ross, the C.O.'s, when they saw who I was visiting, would take the time to tell me, "He's a good guy, that Ross. He's a good guy." I would simply smile and say, "I know."

I know because we've spent countless hours together with weekly visits, phone calls and letters, sharing our lives, and thoughts on the world, morality, religion and God, and in doing so, I've gotten to know an old friend even better. He has become a confidant, someone I know I can always trust, and he always puts me before himself. Anytime I share my own fears and struggles with my life, he is always there with a positive affirmation to boost my spirits in the midst of troubles far greater than mine. He is the kind of man who cares to reach out to people, focus on others, and in some way help those around him, even in the confines of prison. No matter what he may or may not have done, I know in my heart that the actions associated with his conviction were motivated out of a deep passion to make the world a better place. I also know that if you give him the lowest possible sentence, as I pray you will, Ross will use the years he has left wisely and do everything he can to apply the gifts God gave him for a better purpose.

In the end, I hope you consider the actions of his friends and family who continue to support Ross even after his conviction. We stand for him in loyalty, not just because we love him, but also because we believe in his good character. From acquaintances like Chris Kincaid, who roomed with him only a matter of months, to friends who grew up with him, friends like Thomas Haney and Daniel Davis who traveled half way across the country to serve as character witnesses and testify to his peaceful and loving nature, and friends like myself, who sat in on the trial every day, we all continue to support him because he is a man we love and know to be good. When Thomas talked to me after his testimony, we shared stories of Ross and reminisced. Thomas said, "Ross is uniquely wonderful, wonderfully unique." He said he wished he'd had the opportunity to say these words on the witness stand. It's true. Ross is wonderfully unique. And no matter what the outcome, Ross will continue to be uniquely wonderful and we will continue to love him. I pray you grant him as short a sentence as possible so he may return to his loved ones.

Sincerely,


Jenny Keto

[REDACTED]

*Jenny M. Keto*

# **LETTER 63**





April 6, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

My name is Shiloh Travis. I am 38 years old. I've been happily married to my wife Laura for 14 years. We have an 11 year old son and an 8 year old daughter. I am an entrepreneur and have owned and operated my own a custom home building companies since 2001. Along with my business endeavors, I am very engaged in the community, and give a lot of my time towards volunteer efforts to better the lives of people around me. By any measure, I would be considered a constructive, valuable, law abiding, member of my community. I knew Ross Ulbricht to be the same.

I first met Ross in the summer of 2010, when I was putting together a team of volunteers to put on an event designed to enrich and empower the lives of the attendees. I called him up from a recommendation of another friend, not knowing who he was, and asked him if he would consider volunteering his time for some of the event. In that first conversation, it quickly became apparent that Ross was somebody who was committed to the empowerment of others. He blew me away by not only saying yes to my request, but offered to volunteer full time for the entire 5 day event. Of the 16 people that volunteered in the event, he was the only one that was there the whole time. Over that initial time together, he gave his time very generously, and we connected around our common interests and shared commitments. We enjoyed each other's company enough that we made plans to stay in touch. For months after that event we would have scheduled phone calls to coach each other around the areas of life that were important to us. We both shared very personal stuff around our personal relationships, jobs/careers, God, and our shared passion for finding purpose and happiness.

Above all else, a couple things became very clear to me in the time I knew Ross. Ross is a gentle soul, with a huge heart. It always struck me how much of his attention was on seeking ways to express love for others. In my time with Ross, never once was there any conversation about causing damage to others. Ross wouldn't hurt a flea. That's what has been so sad for me

in following this case. Whatever crime Ross has been convicted of, it does not represent who Ross is and the value he can bring to our community. The idea of him being locked up in prison, frankly, seems a tragedy. Not just for him, not just for his family and friends, but for our society. Ross taught me to look towards the service of others to find peace and happiness. It will be a huge loss for our society if his positive and peaceful contribution is taken away. With the upmost respect, I implore you to spare Ross a long sentence, for the time he is locked up will truly be a loss for us all.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shiloh B. Travis', written over the word 'Respectfully,'.

Shiloh B. Travis



# **LETTER 64**



March 20, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

Ross is a close friend of mine who I have known for over a decade. I can unequivocally say that Ross is one of the best individuals I have ever met. I have followed his trial closely since the initial news reports emerged, and I am fully aware of all the accusations and evidence presented, as well as the verdict. I believe it is in society's best interest to give Ross as lenient sentence as possible.

Ross liked the Ghandi quote "Be the change you wish to see in the world." He has lived his life with a vision of a peaceful world where everyone gets along and is the best they can be. In all my interactions with Ross, this philosophy has shone through and he has consistently lived his life in a way that improved the lives of all those around him. It is difficult not to sound hyperbolic when describing Ross. However, let me be clear that what myself and others write about him is true and accurate.

Ross is a kind and gentle soul. I have never seen him show malice or anger towards anyone. This is including when he's been in situations that I would expect to bring out the worst in anyone, such as a romantic partner sleeping with his friends. Even then, when it was clear he was hurting, he did his best to remain calm and try to forgive. After a while he fully forgave everyone and reached out to maintain his friendships without any animosity. I have never seen anyone else who could so genuinely treat others with such compassion and respect.

Ross is generous and thoughtful of others. I have seen him literally give his shirt off his back to someone after they mentioned they liked his shirt. This was not an isolated case. Ross would give away his stuff to people after they merely mentioned they thought it was neat. His generosity would extend well beyond this amusing anecdote. When he was in college he volunteered at charities. Not for resume building or to brag. He basically never mentioned it except when it resulted in scheduling conflicts. His volunteer work was really because he wanted to help people.

Ross also regularly donated to charities in college, despite making a very minimal salary working in a lab. He still was sure to put charity before himself, and was likely donating to help support people who made more money than he did. I asked him why, and he said (paraphrasing) "if I can't learn to do this now, how can I do it if I make a lot of money?" Again, Ross did not do this to brag. The only reason I found out was he was helping me learn to create and follow a budget, and showed me his. I may be the only person who ever knew he did this regularly. And recall this was still at an age when most kids were interested in getting drunk. His humility and desire to do good are a core value of his that I do not feel has diminished. Even as recently as a few years ago he ran Good Wagon Books, which donated to reading programs in prison and mentorship programs for kids.

On a personal note, Ross has been a loyal friend who has helped me grow into the person I am now. I have a PhD in physics, and now work as a postdoctoral scholar at the University of Chicago. Without Ross, I can confidently say I would not be here. Ross helped me through some difficult times early in college, and was a friend to me when I needed one most. Over the years I have come to Ross with whatever problems I've been having, and he has always been happy to talk for hours until I came to peace or a solution with whatever was troubling me. Many of my best qualities I developed largely from using Ross as a role model, and aspiring to achieve his level of goodness. I do not feel I am alone in this, as I could tell many of our friends in college seemed to follow his lead, even if only subconsciously.

I reiterate that Ross is a good person whose conviction does not reflect on who he is as a whole, nor all the good he has done outside of those actions. He has lived his life in an attempt to do good whenever possible. If anyone has earned enough karma to deserve a second chance it is Ross. Ross will attempt to make the world around him better no matter where he is. Indeed, he already has taught yoga classes, physics classes, and helped his cell mate study for the GED. However, a lenient sentence that would allow Ross to reenter the general population as soon as possible would let him continue to affect significant positive change as he has done so many times in the past.

I will now close with (unedited) thoughts I had on the night that I first heard the news of Ross' arrest: *"Ross is one of those rare lights in the world. Over the ten years I've known him, he's always been a loyal friend. There are few crucial turning points in my life, but at almost all of them Ross was there to help guide my path. He has helped me grow as a person in countless ways, and I can say definitively I would not be who I am today, or have arrived at this point in life, without him. We have both changed over the years, but there has always been a core to Ross that has stayed steady."*

Sincerely,



Brandon Anderson



# **LETTER 65**



May 1, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York, United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street, New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

My name is Michele Desloge and I am a real estate investor, developer, and appraiser residing in St. Louis, Missouri where my husband and I conduct our real estate business. I am a longtime friend of Cally Ulbricht and the Ulbricht family. I met Ross and the Ulbricht family while I was pursuing my bachelor's degree at the University of Texas in Austin, Texas. I have known Ross for over 15 years. Cally Ulbricht is one of my closest friends and the Ulbricht family is akin to my own. I had a wonderful experience living with them during my senior year in college and always look forward to our visits.

I am aware of Ross's conviction and have a hard time reconciling the Ross Ulbricht I know with any criminal conduct. On the contrary, Ross Ulbricht is a caring and compassionate person, always striving to learn more from life and give to others. He has a very gentle demeanor and would never hurt anyone. His smile and laugh remain always in my mind as testament to his character.

Ross loves nature and the outdoors. He is interested in wholesome, healthy pastimes. During my time in Austin we spent many days hiking in the greenbelt and swimming at a local natural spring pool.

Ross is very health conscious as well and showed discipline and character about positive living. He was always able to maintain a healthy diet when my friends and I would cheat and eat fast food or ice cream. He is a dedicated young man.

A person such as Ross Ulbricht provides a positive impact on society. We need more people like him contributing ideas and taking action to improve our communities. As such, I hope that he is spared a long sentence for the benefit of the greater good.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MDesloge', written over a solid black rectangular redaction box.

Michele Desloge



# **LETTER 66**



[REDACTED]

May 5, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

My name is Tyler and I live in Portland, Oregon. I moved here after graduating in 2008 and have since been working as an engineer for RDH ([www.rdh.com](http://www.rdh.com)). I am also an active musician and band manager ([www.dusumaliband](http://www.dusumaliband)).

Ross and I met during our time at Penn State, through our mutual involvement as musicians in a student-run West African drum and dance performance company called Nommo. The group rehearsed two-to-three times per week and performed regularly around campus and the surrounding area. I remember Ross as enthusiastic, patient, and kind-natured. He was a great person to have on the team—trustworthy, hard-working, and always showed up. He had a great attitude. We became good friends and eventually found ourselves hanging out away from the rehearsals and shows.

I understand that Ross has been convicted of a crime, and is facing serious penalties. I am writing simply to vouch for Ross as a good person. He is honest and kind, and I cannot imagine Ross conducting himself in any way that would make me feel he should not be allowed back into society. I just cannot picture it.

I trust in my heart that those tasked with determining Ross's sentence are honest and fair. I pray that all aspects of Ross's character and history are fully taken into consideration, as well as the pain and suffering that he and his family have already endured throughout this process.

Thank you for your hard work and effort in deciding this case and Ross's future. I imagine it cannot be an easy position to be in, and I want you to know that I and others appreciate you spending your time figuring it out.

Sincerely,



Tyler Smith  
[REDACTED]

# **LETTER 67**

Michael Haney  


March 23, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

My name is Michael Haney and I work for an oil and gas services company. I am writing to ask that you give Ross Ulbricht a second chance to turn his life around and make a positive impact on society.

Ross is a long-time friend of my son Thomas, since early in their high school years. Ross has always been one of my favorites of Thomas' friends. My experience and that of my son is that Ross is a kind, friendly and thoughtful person with tremendous potential. He cares deeply for his friends, and they for him.


Despite Ross' criminal conduct and conviction, please don't allow his sentence to destroy the potential he holds to do something positive with his life. I respectfully ask you to please allow Ross to return to society as soon as possible. I am very confident, that given a second chance, he will be an exemplary citizen and role model.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Haney  


# **LETTER 68**

  
March 30, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

I have had the pleasure of knowing Ross for the majority of my life and have come to consider him another member of my family. My name is Ariana Stern-Luna and I am the sister of René Pinnell, one of Ross's closest friends for the past 18 years. My relationship with Ross is very much like that of a sibling, maintaining a close bond no matter the distance or time. I feel as though I grew up with a second older brother—another role model to look up to.

I am a counseling student at the University of North Texas, and have always prided myself in my instinctual judge of character. My natural ability to sense the degree of genuineness, empathy, and compassion in others is what drove me into the helping profession. I have never doubted these qualities in Ross, but rather admired the limitlessness of them. He is one of the most kind-hearted, caring, and peaceful individuals I have ever met and his positive energy seems tangible to every person he comes into contact with. He has a way of making others feel at ease and worthwhile. Even when I was the (probably annoying) younger sibling trying to hang out with my cool older brother and his friends, Ross always made me feel valued and included. All of my memories of him involve being surrounded by friends and family, laughing and purely enjoying life. I could not help but become angered when reading articles that attempted to twist the story to create a villainous image of Ross that could not be farther from the truth.

Not only have I observed the positive impact that Ross has had among the individuals who he has personally encountered throughout the years, but I have always believed his positive impact would one day expand to benefit society as a whole. I have never doubted his ability to do something great for humanity, until the unimaginable and shocking threat of imprisonment immersed. The criminal conduct that Ross has been convicted of is difficult to accept, as these charges do not represent the person I have come to know and love. It is devastating to see such a wonderful person facing such horrific consequences. Although much has already been lost in this heartbreaking trial, hope remains that Ross will be given a sentence that allows him to return to his family, his community, and his society.

Sincerely,

  
Ariana Stern-Luna



# LETTER 69



April 20, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest

United States District Judge

Southern District of New York

United States Courthouse

500 Pearl Street

New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

I have known Ross since I was in middle school, he was always a caring, nice gentleman, who was very smart & was never interested in going to hang out to do anything bad with us other kids on the bus, even amongst the teen peer pressure. I always thought he was so kind hearted & admired him as a peer, and a friend. Later in life, reconnecting through social media, he was still the same kind & friendly person we ALL knew Ross to be. I could never imagine him doing any wrong or wishing harm to anyone, thats just how he is. Thank you.

Sincerely,

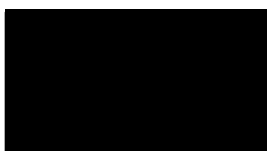
Rosa da Silva



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rosa da Silva', written over the redacted name.

# **LETTER 70**





May 6, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse, 500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

If you had told me years ago that I would be writing a letter to a judge regarding the sentencing of my friend Ross Ulbricht, I would never have believed you. Even with the reality of his verdict, I still find it difficult to believe. I was an acquaintance of his in high school, but after he and I participated in a weekend course together, and were both in college on the east coast, he became my friend.

The course was one of those things most people call self-help, but that presupposes that people who participate are looking to fix something broken about themselves. This was, rather, a place to bring your higher aspirations and deal with the barriers preventing you from making your dreams come true, or, as they put it in the course literature, "Living a life you love, and living it powerfully." Knowing that Ross was the kind of guy who took on challenges and strove for higher ideals was part of what made me want to hang out with him--he was in cahoots with others, and me, in the pursuit of greatness.

I remember once, I mentioned that there was an advanced yoga pose I wanted to get good at, but that it would be impossible without months of stretching. Ross remembered to ask me how it was going months later, long after I had forgotten it was something I had ever said I wanted to do. He is the kind of person who wants you to succeed in your goals. I still haven't mastered that pose, but when I think of the kindness and generosity of spirit that Ross displayed in remembering something I said I wanted for myself, I get motivated to get out the mat and work on it.

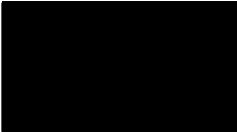
It's hard to consider the verdict and this man as I know him and think that they have anything to do with each other. You know him as he appeared before you in your court. I hope that my letter can help you get a sense of who he has been to other people in his life. Ross is not a danger to society, and in fact I believe that he is someone who makes life better for those around him.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jessica Graves", written over a horizontal line.

Jessica Graves  
Certified American Sign Language Interpreter

# **LETTER 71**



May 7, 2015

The Honorable Katherine B. Forrest  
United States District Judge  
Southern District of New York  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Forrest,

My name is Ashley Callaghan and I am a Corporate Trainer for the restaurant group Mama Fu's. I only have good memories of Ross Ulbricht. Ross and I met through a mutual friend, my college boyfriend, Michael Policelli. Both Michael and Ross were studying Material Science at the Engineering department at The Pennsylvania State University. From the beginning, Ross offered his generous hand at friendship, inviting us along to camping trips, potluck dinners and hikes. When I told Ross I was dealing with eczema, a debilitating skin disease, Ross suggested that I consider joining a club he was active in at the university that studied and practiced a form of traditional Chinese meditation, qigong. He even set up a small introductory meeting with the president of the club, outside of any of their meetings, to make sure I was comfortable with the idea of it. Turns out I was, and I attended the club for the remainder of my college career, along with Ross and Michael and many others I now know as friends. This is how I know Ross-- as a great friend.

My friendship with Ross continued to grow after college. One year after I graduated, I decided to move to Austin, Texas to be closer to my family living in Conroe, Texas. The only people I knew living in Austin at that time were Ross and his girlfriend at the time, Julie Allen. When I told them I was moving down to Austin and moving in with a roommate I had found off of Craigslist whom I had never met, they offered to meet me at the prospective apartment to make sure the roommate and apartment were reliable. Once there, and having realized the living situation was indeed safe, they offered to help me move into the space, up three flights of stairs. I didn't even ask. Ross just offered. And that is how Ross is. He always lends a helping hand. He is one of those generously wholesome people who has everyone's best interests at heart.

These are a slim sampling of the positive ways in which Ross has uplifted my life. I do understand that Ross has been convicted of serious offenses. However, because I am confident he will positively impact others when he is free, please give Ross the shortest sentence possible.

Thank you for taking a moment to read my letter,

Ashley Callaghan

